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Fanatical Divinity Exposed,
AND THE
GOSPEL OF CHRIST VINDICATED;
OR,
R E M A R K S
ON A
S E R M O N,

Occasioned by the Death of —

The Rev. JOHN PARSONS,
Late Rector of St. Martin's, Birmingham.

And preached by

The Rev. WILLIAM TOY YOUNG,
Curate of the said Parish;

WITH A

DEDICATION to the AUTHOR OF PIETAS OXONIENSIS.

By A L U M N U S. *K*

“ If any man speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God.”
1 Pet. iv. 11.

*Moralis Stoicorum disciplina splendidum quidem & illustre corpus
est, verum NERVIS ET ARTUBUS CARET.*

Mosheim. Institut. Histor. Ecclesiast. Pars I. cap. 1.

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DEDICATION
TO THE
AUTHOR OF PIETAS OXONIENSIS,

S I R,

THE gospel of the blessed God has, of late, fallen into such disrepute with some of the *Clergy*; and their defection from truth is so notoriously complicated with the guilt of a departure from *engagements the most sacred and the most solemn*; that I could not prevail upon myself to sit by a silent and unaffected spectator of so melancholy an event, particularly when exemplified in a very recent and striking instance. A debate, in the present form, is not very pleasing to the author. But, when the cause of God calls, and a concern for immortal souls prompts, who can help seizing the rod of controversy, to scourge out of the temple of the LORD a wretched system, that has intruded there under the specious garb of truth; but which is, in fact, a thief and a robber?

You will wonder, perhaps, Sir, at one branch of the *title* prefixed to this pamphlet. An explanation of that matter will involve in it my apology too. You are not ignorant, that it is become a popular practice with the adversaries of the gospel, when they are at a loss for argument, in defence of their errors, and when hard pushed with *the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*, (a) to fly to the trite and poultry subterfuge of shouting "enthusiasm! fanaticism! &c." Now, I thought it might not be amiss, for once, to turn the tables on our opponents; and, after having wrested out of their hands a blunt weapon, with which, however, they do much mischief among the ignorant and profane, to direct it against themselves; by evincing *that* to be *fanaticism*, which they call religion, and *vice versa*.

A system, which aggrandizes natural reason upon the ruins of revelation; celebrates a vague thing *called* virtue, to the discredit of that *saving faith* in the Son of God, by which sinners are justified, and from whence springs the fruits of holiness; and establishes human merit, to the depreting the gratuitous mercy of the Most High, and the all-sufficient sacrifice of the Redeemer;—a system, I say, of this nature, is perfectly congenial with the spirit of *deism*; and has, for its real birth-place, the *fanum* (b) of a heathen priest,

(a) *Ephes. vi. 17.*

(b) Temple.

priest, or the portico of a *stoick* philosopher, rather than the temple of truth. He, who adopts, or he who propagates such a spurious theology, is to all intents and purposes *fanaticus*, a fanatic: *the light that is in him is darkness*, (c) and the zeal that actuates him is composed of *sparks of his own kindling*. (d) For, perverted reason being the optic, and the fumes of a bewildered imagination the medium, through which he sees, or pretends to see, spiritual objects; he must, of course, be as remote from rectitude of judgment, and as accessible to the wildest fallies of enthusiasm, as a person can be supposed to be, whom folly, and philosophy run mad, concur to inebriate. Where there is blindness in the head, guilt in the conscience, and pride in the heart, the case always amounts to a mental intoxication; and a man, in this predicament, is as unable to investigate or embrace truth, as a patient in a delirium, or a licentiate besotted with liquor.

Take an instance of the intoxication, produced by depravity in the heart, and vagaries in the head, in the following heathenish position, maintained by a modern doctor of divinity. "In judging of doctrines, let us consult *nature*, and take the light of *reason*. We want no assistance but" (*horibile dictu!*) "the exercise of *our own reason*."

Now

(c) *Mat.* vi. 23.

(d) *Isa.* l. 17.

Now, this sentiment, Sir, I esteem the leading principle of *fanaticism unmasked*; to expose and oppose which, is a principal design in the pages that follow.

You will coincide with me, when I observe further, that where the infallible scriptures of truth are invariably and humbly appealed to, as to a *touch-stone* for trial, a *lamp* for illumination, an *oracle* for instruction, and a *judge* for decision; and the holy spirit is sought to, as their interpreter, to *guide into all truth*; there, is surely, much less danger of being led astray by the flights of an imprefible fancy, or a desultory imagination, than where the authority of the sacred word is cavilled at, and divine teaching is superseded, by the pretensions of a proud director, that refuses controul from the spirit and revelation of God himself. Fanaticism, therefore, is to be found, not with the humble and sober enquirer after truth, who, with his bible in his hand, and his heart elevated to the fountain of wisdom, prays, “What I see not, *teach thou me*; (e) but with self-illuminated rationalists, and self-justifying moralists. And their system, which makes so much of *self, reason, virtue, works*, and so little of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, is (and be it, from this time forth, for ever called) *fanatical divinity*.

Thus,

(e) Job xxxiv. 32.

DEDICATION.

v

Thus, Sir, have I endeavoured to explain and apologize for my *title*, as well as to mark the general outline of an humble attempt to vindicate the gospel of CHRIST. As you have often, with a very laudable zeal, embarked in the same cause, and acquitted yourself with a noble impartiality, when either injured truth, or persecuted piety, solicited your patronage; to whom could I, with greater propriety, form a *dedication*, than to the highly-respected *Author of Pietas Oxoniensis*? Or from whom could a feeble essay, like mine, expect so candid a reception as from a gentleman of your known condescension, and approved attachment to the interests of the gospel? When your many avocations in the elevated sphere, in which Providence hath placed you, will permit, may you sometimes still employ a leisure hour, in taking up your pen to check error, and defend the truth; that so, while you are serving the public in a judicious and unwearied administration of justice as a *magistrate*, you may render a still more important service to that reformed church, of which you glory in being a member, by vindicating her doctrines from the misrepresentations of assailants, whether secret or avowed! And may you long continue to shine a distinguished patron and ornament of that *pure and undefiled religion*, which hath for its basis the Christ-exalting and sinner-debasing system of the gospel;

gospel; and for its object, the glory of God and the salvation of immortal souls. Though you are not privy to this address, and, possibly, may never know the author; yet give me leave, under an assumed signature, to subscribe myself,

S I R,

Your's, most respectfully,

A L U M N U S.



FANATICAL DIVINITY, &c.

WITHOUT staying to consider, whether the *style* of Mr. Young's sermon (*a*) be *turgid* or *terse*, *stiff* or *smooth*, *bombastical* or *florid*—whether the *sentimental* part of it be *original* or *borrowed*, *adulterated* or *pure*—or, whether the *arrangement* and *method* be *disjointed* or *coherent*, *perspicuous* or *confused*—I proceed to what is of much greater importance; and that is, to examine whether the *doctrines* contained in it, be true or false. In the course of this examination, although my *remarks* will be principally founded on the *infallible* decisions of *the law* and *the testimony*, yet I

B

must

(*a*) The *text* which Mr. Young has prefixed to his discourse, is *Psaln xxxvii. 37*. And I cannot help observing that it argues very great *inattention*, to say nothing worse, to chuse a passage of scripture, from whence to frame a *panegyric* for a deceased friend, when that very passage describes the departure of *the wicked*, judiciously cut off in their sins: for, thus runs the context. *I have seen THE WICKED in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree; I went by, and lo! he (the wicked) was gone; I sought him, (the wicked) but his place, &c.*

must be excused, if I sometimes, make my appeal also to the established doctrines of the *church of England*; as to a venerable authority, which Mr. Young cannot honestly contravene, since he has *solemnly subscribed* to it.

Did I not give credit to the sincerity of the author's intentions, one would be almost tempted to think, from the strange misapplication of his text, that all the eulogiums which follow it were designed as a chain of *irony*. But, waving this supposition, which indeed is inadmissible upon every principle of candor and generosity, the only probable excuse which can be suggested for so enormous an oversight is, that Mr. Y. like many others, by no means affects to be thought an accurate *textuary*; unless to overlook both *text* and *context* be a necessary qualification in a claimant to that character. Let him not, however, in his future study of the sacred scriptures, forget that common, though venerable adage, *Bonus textuarius est bonus theologus*.

I. The discourse opens with a few declamatory hints concerning "Meditations on our latter end, reflections upon eternity, the joys of futurity, &c." (b) Contemplations these, which, to the mind of a *true believer*, will always present an ample field for wonder, love, and praise; while, by the eye of faith, he beholds death, and *him that had the power of death*, vanquished in the triumphs of the cross; *life and immortality brought to light* in the gospel; and the prospect into eternity rendered bright and glorious by the resurrection and ascension of the *LORD of life and glory*. But meditations which are not mixed with *faith*, and do not principally

principally fix on that most stupendous, most gracious, and most exuberant theme, *the wonders of redeeming love*, will leave the heart barren, and all the powers of the soul cramped and frozen : and if any joy be the result of such vague and unevangelical meditations, it will be the self-wrought transport of a visionary or conceited philosopher, who pretends to know and find out GOD, without the light of the gospel, and abstractedly from the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST. Mr. Y. therefore, is greatly mistaken, when he says, that a “ consideration of the solemn approach of death will make “ a man spurn the joys of earth, and pant for heaven.” Nothing can effect that, but a well-grounded persuasion that CHRIST hath loved me a sinner ; and that there is in the enjoyment of *him*, what infinitely surpasseth all the fleeting and unsubstantial possessions of earth. A sublime taste of EMMANUEL’s loving kindness is the only effectual antidote, to preserve from the world’s enchanting allurements, and make its sweetest cup taste flat and insipid : and an humble sense of the remainder of corruption, accompanied with a desire of perfect enjoyment of *Christ*, prompts the soul to *pant* for heaven, as the chased and wounded hart for the cooling stream. All that our author can propose, short of this saving knowledge, is mere *rhapsody*. And if death were to draw very near to himself, he would find all his “ serious considerations,” if not accompanied with a believing hold of the salvation of CHRIST, as insufficient for support as a *bruised reed*, and as insecure for shelter, as a *spider’s web*.

II. Equally false and unscriptural is what he ascribes to the power of reflections on the immortality of the

soul. "Would mankind" says he, "but reflect on
 "the immortality of their souls; that hereafter they
 "must exist for ever in misery or bliss: how would
 "vice stand corrected! how would infidelity, atheism,
 "and blasphemy, hide their heads!" (c) But, the
 heathens, many of whom excelled in such reflections,
 could never propose a scheme sufficient radically to
 "correct vice" either in themselves, or others. Not-
 withstanding all their philosophical researches, their
 metaphysical niceties, their reasonings about the fitness
 of things, virtue, &c. the united torrents of "*infi-*
delity, atheism, and blasphemy," swept away every
 principle of truth and righteousness, of virtue and
 knowledge, and left them the slaves of the grossest errors
 and the most scandalous vices. See the long and black
 catalogue of both in *Rom. i. 21—32*. Nothing but
 the publishing salvation through the cross of CHRIST,
 which is the glorious peculiarity of the gospel, will
 ever be found to "correct vice" in its strong holds;
 and it is the rejection of that gospel-truth, and that
 gospel-method of preaching, which multiplies blasphe-
 mies and infidels amongst us of every class and every
 denomination, from him, who *speaks a word against the*
 SON OF MAN, up to the freethinking *materialist,*

"Who dauntless, pursues the path *Spinoza* trod,
 "To truth a traitor, and a brave to God."

When Mr. Y. complains of our "rejecting the voice
 "of reason and religion, and scorning that great
 "teacher, *Death,*" (d) what a pity! that he should
 have so totally overlooked CHRIST, as not to drop

one

one tear, at least, over all the indignity, scorn, and reproach, which are daily offered to that great Redeemer, in a rejection of his blessed gospel, and in a persecution of his faithful ministers and people! Here he might have roused all his holy indignation; awakened all his zeal; vented, without fear of excess, all his sorrow; and, in the pathetic lamentation of the prophet, have cried out, *Oh! that my head were waters, and mine eyes fountains of tears, that I might weep day and night (e)* for the daring blasphemies poured on the person, offices, and work of GOD my Saviour! and for the horrid guilt *they* are accumulating, who, through ignorance and unbelief, *refuse to hear (f)* this great shepherd and bishop of souls. But, alas! this is a species of sorrow known to few! To weep for CHRIST, when his truths are *wounded in the house of his friends (g)*, or openly ridiculed in the courts of his enemies, is deemed unmanly and enthusiastic. So that if you solicit a sympathetic sigh, or ask a tear, for Him who wept and bled for sinners; and who is daily suffering in his members, and in his gospel; even the boasted *charity* of the world is unfeeling here: *wags its head (h)* with indifference or contempt; passes relentlessly by; perhaps, reddens into rage at a request which might make angels weep; or hardens into rock, as if petrified by a sight, sufficient to dissolve a breast of adamant! With how much greater propriety, than Mr. Y. in p. vii. of his sermon, might we ask, in the language of grief and astonishment, “*Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?*” (i) that

CHRIST,

(e) Jer. ix. 1. (f) Heb. xii. 25. (g) Zech. xiii. 6. (h) Mark xv. 29. (i) Lam. i. 12.

CHRIST, the *chiefest among ten thousand (k)*, should be despised and rejected of men? *O tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon*, lest infidels triumph, when they observe *christian* ministers (so called) forgetting not only to pay the tributary tear to the *man of sorrows*, but to mention his *name*, even whilst enumerating popular sins, the most crying and blackest of which is *contempt and disesteem of JESUS*.

III. In page vii. our author introduces "an afflicted sufferer on a bed of sickness, smiling at pain, and feeling the comforts of an *approving conscience within*." A conscience, cleansed from guilt by the blood of CHRIST, and quickened by his spirit to an hearty approbation of that self-abasing method of free justification through the righteousness of CHRIST, is a most invaluable blessing. But a *self-approving, self-justifying* conscience, such as it is easy to perceive Mr. Y. rhapsodizes about, is one of the greatest of curses. It is the seat of ignorance, formality, self-righteousness, and pride. Those who are its unhappy subjects, filled with a fond conceit of their superior goodness, are ever ready, like the Pharisee in the gospel, *to thank God they are not as other men are. (l)* And there are no deluded sinners upon earth who more contemptuously degrade and spurn the gospel salvation. Reader, cry to the Lord to save thee from such a conscience, as the spirit of error recommends: 1. because it is wrapt up in self, and sleeps on the downy pillow of carnal security; 2. because it is a *defiled and unbelieving (m)* one; 3. because it is *fearful* and callous; impervious to every ray of conviction, impenetrable to the sharpest arrows of reproof,

(k) Sol. So. v. 101

(l) Lukexviii. 11.

(m) Tit. i. 15.

reproof, and equally insensible amidst the loudest thunders of *Sinai*, as under the celestial harmony of mount *Sion*; 4. because it is an *evil conscience*, (n) full of the evil of guilt and pollution; 5. because it approves self, which it ought to condemn; and, 6. because it rejects **CHRIST**, and leads to most certain ruin. O, beware of this bosom-idol, which all blind and pharisaical formalists worship; and be assured, melancholy as the condition of the poor profligate, described p. vii. might be, and hopeless as his case might appear to him who has painted it in all the sad variety of woe, yet there is greater hope that such an enormous transgressor might at the eleventh hour receive the gospel and be saved, than of Mr. Y.'s "afflicted sufferer" with his "approving," unafflicted, unwounded conscience. *The publicans and the harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before such,* (o)

IV. From what Mr. Y. styles "the sad spectacle" above alluded to, he asks, "can human nature read "no instructive lesson?" and he answers, "Yes. Reason, prudence, and virtue, all admonish a desertion "of worldly dependencies, and teach us to repose a "confidence alone in the *God of heaven*." * But the *gospel*, which is every real Christian's guide, his counsellor, and his own familiar friend, teaches the awful necessity of deserting all *self-righteous* dependencies, too, as ruinous to immortal souls, as the grossest practical impiety. (p) It admonishes us, moreover, to repose our confidence in **GOD**, not merely "as the **GOD** of "heaven," (for in that absolute point of view, he is a *consuming fire*) (q) but as the father of mercies, and the **GOD**

(n) *Heb. x. 22.* (o) *Matt. xxi. 31.* * Page viii. (p) See *Rom. x. 3, 4.* (q) *Heb. xii. 29.*

GOD of all consolation, because reconciled and propiti-
 ous to his people, through the atonement and righte-
 ousness of CHRIST;—in GOD as *manifest in the flesh*,
 and dying, the *just for the unjust*. Mr. Y. appears to
 have no idea of GOD in covenant-relation; conse-
 quently, according to *his* scheme, which is indeed the
 scheme of deism, heathenism, and infidelity, it seems
 a matter of no importance, whether GOD *were in*
 CHRIST *reconciling the world unto himself*, (r) or not.
 And, as to the kind of “confidence” he recommends,
 it is a spurious and a dangerous one; since being not
 built on the propitiating blood and consummate righte-
 ousness of the Son of GOD, it must leave its *self-*
approving possessor exposed to the condemning sentence
 of the law, the wages of sin, and the wrath of the Most
 High. For *as many as are of the works of the law are*
under the curse. (s) Know, therefore, O reader, if
 you would avoid the bitter fruit of such vague, unscrip-
 tural and delusory confidence, you must build your all
 upon that rock of ages, in whose *name the gentiles*
trust, (t) and to whom the *ends of the earth are to look*
and be saved. (u) For *other foundation can no man safely*
lay for either confidence or acceptance, for wisdom or
 sanctification, *than that which is laid, which is JESUS*
 CHRIST. (x)

When our author dispatches us, for admonition, to
 “reason, prudence, and virtue,” he seems to forget,
 and I am sure, he implicitly degrades, the *spirit* and
revelation of GOD; without the agency and guidance of
 which, his admired *reason* will prove an *ignis fatuus*;
 his

(r) 1 Cor. v. 10. (s) Gal. iii. 10. (t) Matt. xii. 21.
 (u) Isa. xlv. 22. (x) 1 Cor. iii. 11.

his *prudence* turn out servile conformity to the base principles of a *world lying in the wicked one*; (y) and his *virtue* be nothing more than a little superficial morality or pharisaical formality, devoid of sincerity or of power. Reader, you may easily perceive what the world's reason, prudence and virtue are, by their effects on our modern rationalists, and prudentialists. They are three *idols*, which spring from that accursed, many-headed hydra, *Self*: they are three *phantoms*, which delude their fascinated votaries into the inextricable mazes of pride and enthusiasm: and, for any thing they can do, in a way of enlightening, sanctifying, and saving a sinner, they are in fact three *nothings*. And yet, when placed upon the head of *Self*, they form a kind of *triple crown* as arrogant as that of *his holiness*, which detracts from the dignities, and usurps the prerogative of Him, who is the Prophet, Priest, and King of his people. And, instead of following Mr. Y.'s favourites, the insufficiency and peril of whose guidance I shall have occasion again to consider, let me beseech the reader to LOOK TO CHRIST; to SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES; and to PRAY FOR WISDOM of Him, who *resisteth proud reasoners, but giveth grace to the humble*. (z)

V. "Where, in this vale of misery, can the journeying pilgrim rest his head?" (a) is an inquiry of the last importance. But should the reader expect a satisfactory solution to it, in the sermon before me, sufficient to crown his anxious researches with success and joy, he would be most grievously disappointed. Our author, after raising expectation a little, by informing us, negatively, that "the world, fortune,

C

" pleasure,

(y) 1 John v. 19.

(z) Jam. iv. 6.

(a) Page 9.

"pleasure, &c." are totally inadequate to the great point in view, leaves the momentous question not only undecided, but in a state of still greater embarrassment and uncertainty, than when he took it up. For, after cautioning the thirsty inquirer after rest, against one *broken cistern*, he sends him to another, still more broken. Having never himself slaked his own thirst at that *fountain of living waters* the fulness of grace in CHRIST JESUS, he overlooks this sacred spring, and points to the muddy and contaminated source of man's "disordered nature." (b) After bringing his pilgrim through

(b) Mr. Y. calls the constitution of man, by the very humbling, but proper epithet of "disordered nature:" yet, in page xi. he represents that very nature as the seat of certain "celestial qualities and divine particles." How what is *disordered* can be at the same time *celestial* and *divine*, the reader is to judge. To me it appears fully as absurd as to say, that a bad constitution, in a confirmed cachexy, possesses all the stamina of health. Mr. Y. would, perhaps, attempt to reconcile the clashing terms of this gross self-contradiction, by pleading, that mankind are a *little* disordered by the first transgression, but that the injury is so extremely slight, that it resembles only a scratch on the finger of a body perfectly sound throughout. The idea, however, which the *scriptures* give us of the ruin of man, is that of a deep, inveterate, and malignant disease wrangling in the centre of the soul, and carrying its deadly poison to every particle of the human frame. But, even allowing Mr. Y's supposed distinction, what will he gain by it?—nothing but absurdity still. For, since his terms "disordered nature" comprehend, surely, more than a single faculty; to be consistent, he ought to have said, that man has a *celestial divine nature*, though it inherits a *few disordered particles*. And then, though he would have been farther from consistency with truth, he would have been less inconsistent with himself. But alas! consistency and truth are no ingredients in the sentiments

through scenes of sorrow, disappointment, and temptation, seeking rest but finding none, he consigns him over at last, for repose and safety—to *reason*; saying, “our *Pilot REASON* must steer us to some happier “coast.” Oh! miserable prescription for the sons of sorrow, sin and care! As soon might the languid patient attempt to compose himself on a pillow stuffed with pungent thorns, as any poor pilgrim expect to procure rest through this recipe of our author, which is in fact as irrational as it is unscriptural.

Could “reason” administer relief to a guilty conscience; could it alleviate the sorrows of a burdened sinner, and assuage the tempest within; could it put corruption in chains; could it furnish an infallible antidote against prosperity’s treacherous smiles, or the gloom of adversity; could it bereave death of its sting, or the grave of its horrors; could it answer the awful demands of law and justice, and fortify the soul upon the prospect of its arraignment to the supreme tribunal of God, the judge of all; could it fix a lamp in that region and shadow of death, man’s benighted understanding, sufficient to lead him to truth, and light him to heaven; or could it allay the insatiable thirst of the human heart after follies and vanities, which are as ruinous as they are bewitching;—could reason, I say, subserve these beneficial and important ends, in which is comprised every thing that relates to our felicity here,

and sentiments or systems of *Pelagians*, who, in the face of contradicting scripture and facts, are always labouring to explain away a truth which is still more firmly established by their very wickedness of their licentious comments, viz. *the deep and universal depravity of human nature*.

and the consummation of it hereafter, then we might court, yea deify her as our *all*. But then too (*horresco referens*) we might instantly consign our *bibles* to the flames; throw by the lamp of revelation as a superfluous and unnecessary guide; take a *Bolingbroke*, a *Hume*, or a *Priestley*, for our oracle; join in the profane cry with a W——n against the influences of the Holy Ghost; think and speak as degradingly of the SON of GOD as the execrable and abandoned author of an *Essay on Woman*; hail a restoration of the halcyon-days of gentilism and infidelity; and unite in a solemn *apothecosis* of dame *Reason*; putting the crown upon her head, and crying to all the sons of science and religion “Bow the knee.” But as these are consequences too horrible to be admitted, even in idea, being pregnant with absurdity and error of the grossest nature; they evidently demonstrate, that the premises on which they are founded must be equally false; and that since lapsed reason cannot put away sin, and sorrow, the effect of it, or point out a complete system in theory for establishing truth and happiness, her banner, and the zealous devotees enlisted under it, are to be deserted; and the poor enquirer is to be dispatched to a different source for rest and peace. For, as soon might a fatigued traveller expect refreshment and ease, amidst the burning sands of a desert, exposed to the vertical rays of the sun, from a view of painted water and shade, as a guilty transgressor derive peace, and imbibe comfort from the powers of reason. *To whom then should he go, blessed JESUS, but unto thee; since thou alone hast the words of eternal life?* (c) How should the journeying pilgrim find

find repose, or where should he seek refreshment, but under the *shade of that tree of life*, which furnishes medicine for the sick, and food for the hungry? which removes lassitude and weakness from the pilgrim's limbs, and invigorates his soul with renewed ardor to pursue his journey, till the conclusion of that puts a period to all his trials? Where should a poor sinner, persecuted by the world, harrassed by Satan, or pursued by that avenger of blood, the *law*, find a secure asylum, but in that almighty Redeemer, who *is as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land?* (d) and who, in the language of infinite compassion and inviolable faithfulness, saith, *Come unto me all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest?* (e) CHRIST is our peace, having made peace by the blood of his cross. (f) And when the holy spirit enables a sinner, in full renunciation of his own righteousness, to fly to the atonement and righteousness of the Redeemer, and to appropriate what he did and suffered, peace is communicated to the conscience, and sacred rest takes place in the heart. Faith is the great instrument in this sovereign application: for, being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (g) This work is well described by the church of England. "Being established in GOD in
 " this true faith, having a quiet conscience in CHRIST,
 " a firm hope, and assured trust in GOD's mercy, through
 " the merits of JESUS CHRIST, to obtain this quiet-
 " ness, rest, and everlasting joy, we shall be as-
 " fured

(d) *Isa. xxxii. 2.* (e) *Matt. xii. 28.* (f) *Ephes. ii. 14.*
 (g) Third Homily against fear of Death.

“ fured after this life to rest in his holy hill, and to
 “ dwell in his tabernacle. (i) The faithful KNOW
 “ the favourable mercies of GOD sealed, the satisfac-
 “ tion by CHRIST toward us confirmed, and the re-
 “ mission of sin established. Here they may FEEL
 “ wrought the *tranquility of conscience*, the *increase of*
 “ *faith*, the *strengthening of hope*, the large spreading
 “ abroad of *brotherly kindness*, with many other sundry
 “ graces of GOD. Now it followeth to have with this
 “ knowledge a sure and constant faith,—that He hath
 “ made upon his cross a full and sufficient sacrifice for
 “ *thee*, a perfect cleansing of *thy sins*.” (k)

If, therefore, the inquiry be again repeated, “ Where
 “ shall the journeying pilgrim find rest,” the answer
 is ready: “ *Not in the world*, its pleasures, riches,
 honours;—*not in the law*, as a covenant of works;—
not in duties, or any performances whatever, intended
 as meritorious qualifications or conditions;—*not in self*,
 the beloved idol of the human heart, nor in all the rea-
 son and fancied goodness of which it boasts;—*not in*
any excellencies, whether the effect of constitution or
 cultivation, whether natural or acquired; *not in any*
privileges, civil or religious, of birth or profession;—
not in any of these, *not in all these together*, can he
 find rest, but IN CHRIST ALONE;—in a simple reli-
 ance, by faith, on his finished work, to the total ex-
 clusion of every plea for peace, justification, and ac-
 ceptance with GOD, but what hath respect to the
 mediator’s all-atoning blood and all-sufficient righte-
 ousness.” This is the refreshing, and this is the rest
 recommended

(i) Second Homily of the right use of the Church, (16)

(k) First Homily on the Sacrament, (16)

recommended in the gospel, with which the Prince of peace satisfies and solaces the hearts of burdened sinners. O reader, seek it here. Seek it in JESUS alone.

When Mr. Y. points us to reason, not only for rest but also for guidance; saying, "our pilot reason must steer us," I must again request the reader to beware. The author's pilot is a most dangerous guide, that has shipwrecked thousands, and tens of thousands, of its devotees, by sinking them in the quick-sands of self-conceit, or dashing them against the rocks of infidelity. And, as well might a tempest-tossed mariner hope to gain his destined port through the vague direction of a shooting meteor, or the light of a glow-worm, (1) as any one sinner expect to attain the haven of eternal rest, without a superior guide to that of reason. What was the fate of the Greeks and Romans, who steered by his popular pilot? Did *their* reason lead them to truth, or point them to rest? No. *Professing themselves wise, they became fools. When they knew GOD, they glorified him not as GOD, but became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened.* (m) *The world by wisdom knew not GOD* (n) All their boasted reason, exerted in the most celebrated systems of their philosophers, left them the slaves of sin, and the dupes of the grossest idolatry. Hence an ingenious writer says, "All the *very best* systems among the Gentiles established *superstition and idolatry*,"

(1) ——— Reason's lamp, which like the sun in sky,
 "Throughout man's little world, her beams *once* spread,
 "Is now become a sparkle, which doth lie
 "Under the ashes, half extinct and dead."

DAVIES,
 (m) Rom. i. 21. 22.
 (n) 1 Cor. i. 21.

“ try, as may be seen from *Plato's* fourth and eighth “ book of laws, and also from *Cicero's* second book of “ laws throughout.” (*) A shocking blemish this, on the reason and religion of two of the greatest champions of heathenism. And, even those among them, who saw and confessed the absurdity of practical polytheism, were, nevertheless, so swayed by popular prejudices, as to make conscience truckle to custom, and truth bow to the idolatrous laws which supported it: so that they held the truth, respecting the existence or unity of the Godhead in the most abominable *unrighteousness*. Thus, *Seneca*, in his book *de superstitione*, as quoted by *St. Augustine*, *de civit. Dei*, lib. 6. cap. 10. says, *Quæ omnia sapiens servabit tanquam ligibus jussa.* (†) And afterwards it is added, *Omnem istam ignobilem Deorum turbam, quam longo ævo longa superstitio congeffit, sic adorabimus, ut meminerimus cultum ejus magis ad morem quam ad rem pertinere* (o). Upon which *Augustin*, with his usual brilliancy of thought, observes, *Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat* (p). *Marcus Antonius*, an emperor and a philosopher, so far gloried in his superstitious veneration for his idol-gods, as to plume himself on that account, with the prospect of success against the rebellion of *Cassius*. “ We have

“ not
 “ (*) Mr. Jackson, in his answer to *Christianity as old as the creation*.

(†) “ All which things a wise man will observe, as being commanded by the laws.”

(o) We will adore all that *ignoble rout of gods*, which long superstition hath, for ages, heaped together, so as to remember, that the worship of them is more a matter of custom, than of importance.”

(p) “ He practised what he reprehended; he did what he re-
 proved; and what he blamed, he adored.”

"not been such negligent worshippers of the gods," says he, "As to fear that *Cassius* will get the victory."—And even the celebrated moralist *Epictetus* sacrifices at the same idolatrous shrine, when he says, ΣΠΕΥ ΔΕΙΝ ΔΕΧΑΙ ΔΥΕΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΑΡΚΕΣΘΑΙ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΑ ΤΑΤΡΙΑ ΕΚΑΣΘΙΣΣ ΠΡΟΣΗΚΕΙ. (q) To these quotations I can superadd nothing more calculated to corroborate the sentiment, and illustrate the argument for which they were brought, than the words of the great Mr. *Locke*, though even those are more lax than I could wish. "Natural religion, in its full extent was *no where*, * that I know of, taken care of by the force of *natural* " *reason*. It should seem, by the *little* that hath been " done in it, that it is TOO HARD a thing for *unassisted* " *reason* to establish *morality* in all its parts upon its *true* " foundations with a clear and convincing light." (r)

But there is one incontrovertible fact, which stamps everlasting infamy on the world's boasted *reason*, under all the advantages which philosophy could give it; and in the face of ten thousand sophistical pleas demonstrates, that, what men have cried up, as vehemently as the *Ephesians* did their *Diana*, is an impudent idol, that usurps the official character of the son of God as the prophet of his church, and attempts to supersede the necessity and utility of divine revelation. This notorious fact is, the contemptuous rejection of the everlasting gospel by the literati of Greece. Although the evangelical system possessed every intrinsic excellence, which

D

the

(q) "Every one ought to offer libations, sacrifices, and first-fruits, according to the custom of his country," i. e. to conform to the prevailing idolatry, whatever it be.

(r) *Reasonableness of Christianity*, p. 268.

the inspiration of the Almighty could give it; displayed the many-fold wisdom of God in the most illustrious and captivating points of view; exhibited truth, mercy, justice, loving-kindness, holiness, all honoured in their respective claims, and all meeting together, through CHRIST, in the most perfect reciprocal harmony; and although this divinely-inspired system was strongly recommended by the erudition and oratory of so powerful an advocate as the great apostle of the Gentiles; yet, that same apostle hath left it upon record, that the gospel was, *to the Greeks*, FOOLISHNESS. (f) Though full of the wisdom of God, it appeared to them replete with folly. Where was their *reason*, when they pass such an ignominious sentence upon the wisest and most gracious scheme, that ever was revealed to man? Why, it was *supposed* at this time to have arrived at the point of meridian brightness. *Corinth* abounded with philosophers of various demonstrations; and an education among them was deemed such a privilege, that *Horace* says,

Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum.

Yet here, in this great nursery of reason, the gospel of Christ was cast out with the most arrogant contempt. At *Athens*, another famous seminary for philosophers and reasoners, it met with a similar reception; while *Paul*, who preached it, was styled by the *Epicureans* and *Stoics*, there, a *babbler*, and a *setter forth of strange gods*. (t) A consideration of which might well make the apostle ask, with an air of triumph, *Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world?*

(f) 1 Cor. i. 23.

(t) Acts xvii. 18.

world? Hath not God MADE FOOLISH the wisdom of this world? (u)

If then it be a fact, as it undeniably is, that the infinite and unerring reason of the all-wise God, displayed in the *gospel*, has been blasphemed and despised most by the several tribes of philosophers, reasoners, disputers, scribes, the reputed *oracles* of the world; what becomes of reason's boasted guidance? or, who would trust to such a pilot? Were it in its *original* state of rectitude, uncorrupted through the fall, it might answer the purpose of infallible direction. But, as the necessity of a revelation implies the contrary; till reason be *restored* to its primitive *soundness*, it must be an incompetent judge of spiritual subjects. *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are SPIRITUALLY discerned.* (x)

Recent facts corroborate the truth of this observation. Let us look at home, and see into what whirlpools the celebrated "pilot" is steering our *modern* philosophers. Setting out with this most erroneous hypothesis, "that we are to admit nothing that appears "contrary to *our* reason," they blunder on, in all their consequent examinations and deductions. This fatal flaw affects every link in their system, and produces a long concatenation of errors. The idol-pilot being placed at the helm in the soul, and the spirit and revelation of God being of course superseded in their conjoined influence; mistakes and dangers *ad infinitum* must ensue. That we should admit nothing that is contrary to RIGHT reason, to ENLIGHTENED reason, to

D 3

God's

(u) 1 Cor. i. 20.

(x) 1 Cor. ii. 14.

God's reason, is as true as wise. But when it is urged that "*our*" reason is to decide, one is obliged to ask, "*Whose?*" the reason of our *philosophers?* our *deists?* our petitioning *divines?* our *free-thinkers?* our *Arians?* our *Socinians?* our *materialists?* *Whose* reason amongst these several classes of pretenders to it is to be judge? All will put in their respective claims to a right of judging, for themselves, and for others too, perhaps. Is every man's own reason to be a judge to himself? If so, then truth must vary as much as the complexion; often assume equally the names of light and darkness, right and wrong; be every where, and no where. Is reason an *universal* and *certain* judge or guide to every man? Then every man must be right, and reason must be the same in all: but this is contradicted by undeniable facts. Since an infinite diversity of opinions, for and against truth, prevails in the world; since the advocates on all sides are equal claimants to the right of judging, and the purity of reason; and since both cannot be right, amidst their most plausible but contradictory pleas; does it not from hence follow, that there must be some *fixed and determinate standard of truth*, from whence there can lie no appeal? And what can this be, but THE SCRIPTURES given by *inspiration of God?* (y) *To the LAW, and to the TESTIMONY: If they speak not according to these things, it is because there is NO LIGHT in them.* (z) Hence that command of CHRIST, *search the scriptures.* (a) And the advice of an Apostle to *take heed to the word, as to a light that shineth in a dark place.* (b) There cannot, therefore,

(y) 2 Tim. iii. 16.

(z) Isa. viii. 20.

(a) John v. 39.

(b) 2 Pet. i. 19.

therefore be devised, more wicked and execrable counsel, than that which says, " In trying the spirits and " judging of doctrines, let us consult *nature*, and the " *first* dictates of *conscience*, and take the light of *reason* " along with us : " because it sends a man to himself, instead of to God ; it puts reason upon the throne, and revelation at the idol's feet ; and makes that which is *fallible*, to sit in judgment upon *infallible* authority. And it is not to be wondered, that the authors of such counsel should exemplify their own sentiments, by being the abettors of such a mass of damnable errors, as one might only have expected from the schools of heathen philosophers, or the vatican at Rome. Who can help sending such rationalists to learn divinity from a poet ?

" *Dim*, as the borrowed beams of moon and stars
To lonely, weary, wand'ring travellers,
Is *reason* to the soul : and as on high,
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us there ; so reason's glim'ring ray
Was lent, not to *assure* our doubtful way,
But guide us forward to a *better day*. (c)

But it will be urged that people err, with the bible in their hands ; granted. The fault, however, is not in the word of God, but in its pretended interpreters ; and the diversity of interpretation arises from the different light or medium through which the scriptures are viewed. The great enemy, here, is carnal reason, which makes the word of God bend to its own preconceived ideas. As *these* are correspondent with that darkness,

(c) Dryden.

ness and depravity, which reign in the heart, hence false principles, false conclusions, false interpretations, and damnable heresies. Men bring their "light of nature" to the scriptures, and *make* them speak, what *that* dictates. Hereby the word of God is *wrested to their destruction.* (d) Proud reason does not relish *mysteries.* These dazzle and confound her light; and are rejected, because not *comprehended*, forsooth. Hence the ravings and contradictions of the fanatic followers of *Arius* and *Socinus*; who reject the capital truths of revelation, because they cannot conceive, and will not believe, that *all the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in CHRIST JESUS,* (e) and that God *was in him, reconciling the world unto himself,* (f) by making "a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for sin," (g) *by one offering of himself once offered.* (h) Since, however, there are others, who interpret scripture differently, and, by their interpretations, do honour to right reason, and to the great truths of the gospel; what are we to infer from hence, but that some *supernatural* influence is necessary to save natural reason from her inherent perversity and pride, and make her know her proper place, by acknowledging the all-commanding authority of God's word? to illuminate her blindness, and guide her successfully, under the humble discipline of *faith*, in her researches after truth?—that the influence which produces such important effects, must be that of the *spirit of God?* and that the reason why men differ so widely in their interpretation of scripture, is because some are taught by the *spirit,*

(d) 2 Pet. iii. 16. (e) Col. ii. 9. (f) 2 Cor. v. 19.
(g) Communion service. (h) Heb. x. 14.

rit, while those who decry and deride his divine teaching are manifestly actuated by the *father of lies*? It is impossible, surely, that two persons, with the bible in their hands, holding tenets diametrically opposite to each other, relative to the essential doctrines of the gospel, can be influenced by the *same* kind of reason, and be *both* right. Truth cannot rest with both. And, since to *know the truth* (i) is essential to salvation, and to *believe a lie* (k) will certainly *damn*, some provision must be made for the soul's *certain* direction in a matter of infinite importance. This provision must be in the teaching of the *spirit*, whose office it is to *guide into all essential truth*, (l) and to *open the understanding to understand the scriptures*, (m) as a *spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God*. (n)

The spirit of error, with its wonted audacity, will tell us "we want no assistance, but the exercise of our own reason." The greatest proof imaginable that the man who can assert this, has not one grain of right reason, or of scripture, to support his position; and I am sure, an author requires extraordinary "assistance" to keep his indignation from kindling into excessive warmth, against an assertion so execrable, so full of pride, so big with blasphemy against the spirit, and the scriptures of God. Nothing surely could ever have dictated it, but *heresy grown grey in the service of the father of lies*, and swollen to the full, and ready to burst with envenomed spleen against the gospel of the blessed God. I beg leave now to confront the unhallowed claims of proud reason, with the following testimonies

- (i) *John* xvii. 3. (k) *2 Thess.* ii. 11. 12. (l) *John* xvi. 13.
(m) *Luke* xxiv. 45. (n) *Ephes.* i. 17.

monies from the oracles of truth, and from the established doctrines of the church of England; in order to demonstrate, the absolute necessity of the united influence of the spirit and word of God, to investigate truth aright.—To begin with the scriptures.—*God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were ANY that did UNDERSTAND and seek after GOD (o). There is NONE that understandeth: they are ALL gone out of the way. (p) Having the understanding DARKENED through the ignorance that is in them, because of the BLINDNESS of the heart. (q) They do ALWAYS err in their HEART. (r) Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil, and that continually. (s) If our gospel be HID, it is hid to them that are LOST, in whom the god of this world hath BLINDED the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of GOD, should shine unto them. (t) The world by WISDOM knew not God(u). I thank thee, O Father, LORD of heaven and earth, that thou hast HID these things from the WISE and PRUDENT, and hast revealed them unto BABES. (x) Ye must be BORN AGAIN. (y) It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all TAUGHT OF GOD. (z) Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things in thy law. (a) What I see not, teach THOU me. (b) I counsel thee to buy of me EYE-SALVE, that thou mayest see. (c) CHRIST is made of God unto us WISDOM. (d) Every man that hath heard and LEARNED of the Father cometh*

(o) Psa. xiv. 2. (p) Rom. xi. 12, 13. (q) Ephes. iv. 18. (r) Heb. iii. 10. (s) Gen. vi. 5. (t) 2 Cor. iv. 3. (u) 1 Cor. i. 21. (x) Mat. xi. 25. (y) John iii. 7. (z) John vi. 45. (a) Psa. cxix. 18. (b) Job xxxiv. 32. (c) Rev. 3. 18. (d) 1 Cor. i. 30.

cometh unto me. (e) Jesus said unto them, if ye were blind ye should have no sin; but now ye say, *We see, therefore, your sin remaineth.* (f) I am come a LIGHT into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide IN DARKNESS. (g) I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. (h)——He shall GUIDE you into all TRUTH. (i) Sanctify them through the truth: thy WORD is truth. (k) FLESH AND BLOOD hath NOT revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. (l) GOD, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath SHINED in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (m) God hath REVEALED them unto us by his spirit. (n) For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of a man which is in him? even so the things of God KNOWETH NO MAN, but the spirit of GOD. (o) Now if ANY MAN have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. (p)——I thought it necessary to transcribe the preceding quotations entire, (which are but few out of the many that might be brought) instead of making a bare reference to them; because in the latter case they are seldom read. And, as they are laid before Mr. Y. in a connected arrangement, with a view to let him see, in a small compass, what God saith concerning the state of man's intellectual powers since the fall, and the necessity of a supernatural influence to illuminate and guide them in search of truth; Mr. Y. is to judge, how far his un-

E

assisted

(e) John vi. 45. (f) John ix. 41. (g) John xii. 46. (h) John xiv. 16. (i) John xvi. 13. (k) John xvii. 17. (l) Mat. xvi. 17. (m) 2 Cor. iv. 6. (n) 1 Cor. ii. 10. (o) 1 Cor. ii. 11. (p) Rom. viii. 9.

assisted "pilot" can steer a safe course heavenward, without CHRIST at the helm, and without that unerring *compass*, the infallible scriptures of GOD. This, however, I must tell him, that if he chuse to navigate the troubled sea of a sinful and sorrowful world under the sole direction of his *reason*, I am determined he shall fail *alone*, for *me*. A man's *everlasting All* is so precious, that the acquisition of the whole world would not countervail the loss of it: and, amidst so many perils from tempests, from rocks, and quicksands, I am determined that none but the LORD JESUS CHRIST shall be entrusted with a *cargo* of such inestimable value; remembering it to be a record of him, authenticated by the experience of millions, that *HE is able to KEEP that which is committed to him against the great day*; (q) considering too, what multitudes have foundered in their voyage; have been ingulphed in the dreadful *charybdis* of self-righteousness; or totally shipwrecked against the rocks of ignorance, pride and unbelief; because they would not let CHRIST *have in ALL things the pre-eminence*. (r)

Should Mr. Y. be disposed to controvert the point in debate, upon the authority of scripture, notwithstanding the passages I have produced from it; he will not, however, dispute the *meaning*, and he dare not, without flying in the face of his own church, dispute the *truth* of the following extracts, because they are taken from her homilies: "Reason must *give place* to "God's Holy Spirit. The Holy Ghost is the school- "master of truth, which leadeth into all truth; and "whoso is not *led* and *taught* by him, cannot but fall "into

(q) 2 Tim. i. 12.

(r) Col. i. 18.

“ into *deep error*, what knowledge or learning soever he
 “ hath. (s) St. *Chrysostom* saith, Man’s human and
 “ worldly wisdom or science is not needful to the un-
 “ derstanding of scripture, but the *revelation of the*
 “ *Holy Ghost*, who inspireth the true meaning into
 “ them.” (t)

VI. In p. xi. we are presented with a view of man,
 as the supposed subject by nature, of certain “ celestial
 “ *qualities* and *divine particles*,” which constitute him
 “ the child of heaven.” But this happens to be a trait
 of human nature, taken, not from the sacred original
 of God’s word, but from the enthusiastic reveries of
 self-exalted reason ; whose representations are generally
 attended with a fatal *descriptio visûs*. What our author
 styles “ celestial qualities,” it is acknowledged, *origi-*
nally dwelt in the frame and constitution of man, when
created after the image of God. But a loss of that image,
 by the fall, was attended with a privation of those qua-
 lities, and an implantation of such seeds of corruption,
 as constitute him *now* the subject of sin, and *by nature*
a child of wrath. To eradicate the latter (which the
 church of England calls “ the *diseases of our souls*,” (u)
 and to restore the former is the effect of the agency of
 God’s holy spirit. And till “ the thoughts of the heart
 “ are *cleansed* by his holy inspiration,” (x) it is the seat,
 not of “ celestial,” but of infernal “ qualities,” not
 of “ divine,” but of diabolical “ particles, which
 “ constitute him the child of hell,” being under the
 influence of that *wisdom which is from beneath, and is*
earthly,

(s) First and second part of the Homily on certain places of
 scripture. (t) Second Homily on reading the scriptures.

(u) Coll. for Luke’s day. (x) Communion service.

earthly, sensual, and devilish. (y) And that Mr. Y. may see, how far that nature, which his own pen has styled “weak, feeble, and disordered,” merits the sparkling epithet, with which he has inconsistently and erroneously aggrandized it; I beg him to attend to the following description, given by an infallible expositor. *Out of the HEART proceed evil thoughts,* (or, rather, *οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ* evil reasonings, that corrupt the mind and pervert truth) *adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.* (z) Lest he should evade the force of this humiliating testimony, by alledging that it was intended as the description of some individuals of a peculiarly-abandoned complexion; let him recollect the delineation of the heart itself, considered in the abstract. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?* (a) Should he, however, be bold enough, still to stand forth as an advocate for the inherent “celestial qualities” of human nature, I must beg leave to remind him, that he never officiates in the congregation, but he sets his seal, *ex ore* at least, to the opposite doctrine; when in the general confession, he acknowledges “there is NO HEALTH in us,”—that he never catechises, but his catechumens must declare, “they are by nature BORN IN SIN, and the children of wrath;—that he never baptizes,” but he says, “all men are CONCEIVED AND BORN IN SIN;”—but above all, that when he was ordained, he gave his solemn assent *ex animo* to the ixth. article of the church of England, which maintains, that “man is very far (*quàm longif-*
simè,

(y) *Jam.* iii. 15. (z) *Mat.* xv. 19. (a) *Jer.* xvii. 9.

“ *finé*, as far as possible) gone from original righteousness, and is OF HIS OWN NATURE INCLINED TO EVIL.”

But, should Mr. Y. amidst all the scripture evidence by which the doctrine of man's natural depravity and guilt is supported, and the indispensable obligations he is laid under to the great Bishop of souls, to his Diocesan, to the church of England, and to his conscience, to preach it—should he, I say, nevertheless, still entertain a doubt of its reality, and habitually violate his ordination-vows, by with-holding this offensive, because, most humiliating doctrine, from his hearers; I will present him with a paradox from a venerable prelate of his church, a solution of which will equally account for his *doubts* as for his *guilt*. “What is it but *original sin*,” says the great Bishop *Beveridge*, “that can so far *blind* any man's eyes, as not to see what is continually before his eyes. If I look for it, and *cannot* find it, I do as really find it, as I look for it: for then I find it *disenabling* me to find that, which otherwise I could not chuse but find.” (b)

VII. In some reflections, p. xv. our author says, “Whenever we cast the eye on the monuments of the dead, let us think how soon the same silent prison may entomb our remains.” *Hactenus hæc*. But is this *all* that should engage the consideration of *guilty* mortals? After the poor *body's* consignment to its native dust, will not the *immortal part* of every individual be either borne on the wings of angels to Abraham's bosom, or transported to the regions of the damned, and shut

up

(b) See Bishop *Beveridge's* Exposition of the Articles.

up in hell for ever? Is not death *eternal*, as well as *temporal*, the wages of sin? And will not this be the bitter portion of the impenitent and unbelieving? Is it not as certain a truth, as it is a tremendous one, that all who die in their sins, unpardoned through the blood of CHRIST, and unrenewed by his Spirit, are lost for ever? Should not unbelieving formalists, and self-righteous, self-virtuous pharisees, as well as open sinners, be *told* plainly, that they alone are *blessed* who die IN the LORD JESUS? And that disunion of heart from him, will subject to every curse written in the book of GOD?

Instead, then, of preaching a little dry ethic lecture about death, and introducing the words *eternity* and *judgment*, sometimes, perhaps, only just to help out the cadence of a finely-turned period, an audience should be made, as it were, to look into the eternal world, while the preacher speaks of such subjects as the horrors of hell, as well as the gloom of death—the awful existence of the soul, as well as the humble state of the vile body—the re-union of both at the sound of the last trumpet—the attendant circumstances of the resurrection-morning—the earth and heavens in a flame—the sun turned into darkness, the moon into blood—the dead raised—the JUDGE enthroned, the judgment set, and the books opened—the nations arraigned—the irrevocable sentence—the fearful doom of those who reject CHRIST, and despise his gospel—the ineffable bliss of the righteous, who wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb—the separation of the former from happiness, from heaven—the triumphant admission of the latter the beatific vision

of JESUS—the songs of the righteous; the lamentations of the wicked—time ended; and eternity, awful eternity, setting an irreverfible feal to the decisive tranfactions of the laft day, and confirming for ever the decrees of the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY.

Thus fhould the facred orator lift up his voice, like a trumpet; otherwife his hearers will *sleep* on all fides of him, and go to hell foothered in their fins, or intoxicated with the ftupifying opiate of felf-righteous pride; while (O fearful thought!) their blood will God require at the timid or flattering preacher's hands. *Cursed is he who doth the work of the LORD deceitfully.* (c)

VIII. Mr. Y. fpeaks much about “a good name;” and much more, I doubt, than either truth or facts will warrant. “Let us be ftrenuous,” fays he, “to obtain “this beft of treafures.” The word of GOD, however, can direct us to a much better treafure than a good name; which is but a precarious thing at beft, fince it depends fo much upon the fluctuating opinion of a capricious world; and that better treafure is a *new name*; (e) a *new heart*; (f) a *new creation*; (g) a faving intereft in all the unfearchable riches of CHRIST, who is the believer's *pearl of great price*, and in whom are laid up all the treafures of wifdom and knowledge, of grace and glory. Let us be ftrenuous to obtain *this* beft of treafures, although the acquisition fhould be followed with the lofs of every thing elfe, and, among the reft, of our good name; ever remembering the noble eftimate which the apoftle made of all things, compared with

(c) Jer. xlviii. 10. (e) Rev. ii. 17. (f) Pfal. li. 10.

(g) 2 Cor. v. 17.

with the *excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS THE LORD.* (b)

It is admitted, that “the approbation of wise and “good men is an exalted satisfaction.” But, persons called wise and good, have often no real pretensions either to wisdom or goodness; and, in the estimation of GOD, are both fools and wicked. A good name, which derives its reputation and establishment from the opinion and applause of such, is nothing but an empty bubble, a fatal *misnomer*, an adulatory puff; and, in many cases, an infamous mark of practical rebellion against GOD: for, he who is the favourite of men, is often a foe to CHRIST. *The friendship of the world is enmity with God: (i) and that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in his sight. (k)*

It is also allowed, that “we should have regard to “our name,” as the *apocryphal* writer, whom Mr. Y. has quoted, advises; and, that according to an inspired judge, *a good name is as precious ointment (l)* diffusing its odors through the circle of society; embalming the memory of the righteous; rescuing their actions from oblivion; and transmitting their characters with fragrant and honourable mention to posterity. But the grand question still is, What constitutes a good name? The scriptures being judge, it is *a good report through faith; (m)*—the possessing the name, and with it, the substantial endowments of a *believer* in CHRIST; and such as Paul obtained, when he *preached THE FAITH, which once he destroyed; (n)* such as the disciple, whose *praise was in the gospel (o)* had; and such as those old-testament

(b) Phil. iii. 8. (i) Jam. iv. 4. (k) Luke xv. 16. (l) Eccl. vii. 1. (m) Heb. xi. 29. (n) Gal. i. 23. (o) 2 Cor. viii. 18.

testament worthies are renowned for, of whom it is recorded, that *they all died in faith.* (p) The name of a believer in CHRIST, or a faithful preacher of CHRIST, *well reported of for good works*, is the only one that comparatively merits the denomination of *good*, because there can be no intrinsic goodness, without saving faith; since without that, *it is impossible to please God*; and, because, when the name of the world's favourites shall either rot in oblivion, or be remembered with disgust and abhorrence, *this* shall be found written in the Lamb's book of life; shall shine with indelible lustre in the register of the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty; shall survive the wreck of the universe; and live for ever. Let us by all means "have regard to *this name*"—to the scriptural mode of procuring it, and to the consistent deportment necessary to adorn it.

But is this a *popular* name? Do the world love it, and those who bear it? No. The name *christian*, which is but another name for *believer*, was once deemed the most infamous one a man could bear. The world called CHRIST himself a *deceiver*, a *blasphemer*, *Beelzebub*; his apostles, men who *turned the world upside down*; St. Paul, a madman, a *fellow not fit to live*. And to this day, all who live, or preach faithfully the doctrines of Christ and his apostles, share in some degree the same kind of reproach. Their names are cast out as evil; and persecution is generally proportioned to their zeal and faithfulness; so that the more real good they labour to do, the more they are reviled. As *the world lieth in the wicked one*, it will love its own resemblance, and hate the opposite; and it will indicate that

F wickedly.

wickedly-partial temper, by with-holding a good name from real excellence, and by giving one, often, to impiety itself. Thus, for instance, a laborious, evangelical, devoted minister of God's word shall be stigmatized with the opprobrious epithets of *enthusiast*, *methodist*, *fanatic*, &c. And though his own example should furnish the most corroborating proof, that the doctrines of free grace not only secure all the honour to CHRIST in the great work of salvation, but also have a direct tendency to establish holiness, and promote obedience in all its branches, upon principles the most disinterested and noble, and upon grounds the most pure and permanent; yet, it will be ten thousand to one, if the purity of his doctrines, illustrated by the exemplariness of his conversation, be sufficient to guard against imputations, levelled against the former, even though effectually refuted by the latter; or against the most illiberal epithets, which are an attack upon religion, as well as an insult to good sense and common good manners.

On the contrary; a careless, self-indulgent pleasure-taking clergyman, who will revel at the *wakes*, follow the *hounds*, push about the *bottle*, dance at the *assemblies*, preside at the *races*, frequent the *play-house*, or sipper over a *card-table*, (*q*) with the formalists and foolish

(*q*) *Card-playing* is expressly forbidden to clergymen of the church of England, by the 75th canon, entitled, *Sober Conversation required in Ministers*.

"No ecclesiastical person, shall at any time, other than for their honest necessities, resort to any TAVERNS or alehouses; neither shall they BOARD or LODGE in any such places. Furthermore, they shall not give themselves to any base or servile labour,

foolish virgins in his parish, and attend all their ridiculous *routs*, in order to *sanctify* and recommend those *innocent and rational amusements*;—such an one, whose object is the fleece, not the flock; to whom preaching is a burden; the whole system of the gospel, foolishness; and a strict walk his aversion; shall be universally caressed as “a mighty good-natured gentlemen, that *does* “*no-body any harm*”; especially, if, after a week’s pleasure, after having upon Saturday night, sat up late at the bottle with the ‘squire, or at cards with the ladies, he makes a point of it, on Sunday morning, to preach up *good works*; and to caution his flock, against all enthusiasts, who, he will urge, “cry up nothing but *faith*, and would have people *righteous* over-
“much.” (r)

Now, let the scene be only reversed; let *death*, or that irresistible attractive, a *corpulent benefice*, but remove the character just described, and let the former be substituted in his stead, and then it will be seen what

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the

“*hour*, or to DRINKING or riot, spending their time IDLY by
“day or by night, playing at DICE, CARDS, or TABLES, or
“*any other unlawful game*; but at all times convenient, they
“shall hear or read somewhat of the holy scriptures, or shall oc-
“cupy themselves with some other honest study or exercise, al-
“ways doing the things which shall appertain to honesty, and en-
“deavouring to profit the church of God;” (by studying the
scriptures, and composing their own sermons, instead of transcrib-
ing and borrowing from their neighbours, as is the shameful
practice with many) “having always in mind that they ought to
“EXCEL others in *purity of life*, and should be EXAMPLES to
“the people to live well and christianly, under pain of ecclesiastical censures, &c.”

(r) This absurd self-contradiction is quite common with those who understand not what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

the world's *good name* is. Ministerial faithfulness will be instantly abused. The whole parish will ring with complaints of too much preaching, praying, and singing. The person, who watches for their souls, as one that must give an account to God, will be the subject of every card-table confabulation, if not the song of the drunkards; only because he will not suffer his parishioners to go on quietly in their sins, and drop into hell, without lifting up his voice like a trumpet.

But, is the minister of Christ to be discouraged? Is he to be frightened from his work, by the application of hackneyed epithets, given by "the great vulgar or "the small?" Shall he sacrifice *truth, conscience, and immortal souls*, at the shrine of that idol of timid false prophets, the *world's good name*? No, he thinks it an honour to be reproached for the name of Christ. And, while the cry of the world is, "*Away with such a fellow from the earth,*" an anticipation in hope of the sentence of his great Master, *Well done, good and faithful servant*, amply compensates. Besides, he recollects, that Christ hath stamped a badge of infamy on the world's good name, and pointed it out as the black mark, peculiar to *false prophets*, saying; *Wo unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.* (s) Knowing, therefore, it is infinitely more eligible to be *abused* by a careless world, than to be *damned* with it, he goes on steadily in his labour of love, joining issue with the apostle, *None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and*
the

(s) Luke vi. 26.

the ministry, which I have received of the LORD JESUS, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. (t)

It is with fashionable divinity, often, as with fermenting liquors; the deeper you go, the grosser the foeculence. In the sermon under consideration, this is strictly the case. Our author has kept the worst wine till the last. *Wine* did I call it? I declare, what follows, is such bare-faced error, that it would be an abuse of language, to term it even *wine mixed with water*. It is rank poison; and even uncompounded with a single ingredient to render it palatable, or to sheath the deadly pill. What a pity! there should be any, simple or mad enough, to swallow it. (u) Reader be upon thy guard. “Are we grieved with affliction? a *self-conviction of being virtuous is an antidote against every calamity.*” (x)

Now, from whence can this “conviction” which Mr. Y. recommends, be derived? 1. It cannot be a
a fruit

(t) *Acts xx. 24.*

(u) As an apology for Mr. Young’s printing his sermon, he says in the *preface*, that the publication of it, was at “the request of many *respectable*” persons. In the author’s own estimation, they might appear so; but not in the judgment of him who accepteth no man’s person. For nothing can stamp genuine respectability on the character of those, who “request,” what is calculated to wound the truths of the gospel, and to ruin immortal souls; and whose “*countenance*” ought to be dreaded by a minister as death; since to please such “friends” and such a “*public*” is to displease the most high God, and to incur the horrid guilt of pleasing a blind and carnal world at the expence of eternal truth. He was surely a wise man, who said, *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ*, Gal. i. 10.—Many a performance comes out under the *imprimatur* of parishioners, who would *persecute* a man, that told him the truth.

(x) *Psal. xv. 16.*

a fruit of the *Spirit*, because it is his office to *convince* of SIN. (y) 2. It cannot be founded on the testimony of GOD's word; since *the scriptures have concluded ALL under SIN, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become GUILTY before God.* (z) It cannot be a conviction wrought through the law; for, *by the law is the knowledge of SIN.* (a) 4. It cannot be from the *gospel*; because, *that is good news to the guilty, to the lost*;—not to those, who think they are *whole*, virtuous,—but to the *sick*,—to *sinners*; and because it is the business of the *gospel*, to *bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of CHRIST*; to exalt him, as the LORD our *righteousness*; to pull down and humble in the dust, all the fancied goodness, virtue, and reason of proud transgressors, that *whosoever glorieth, may glory in the LORD JESUS.* 5. Hath Mr. Y. borrowed his “conviction” from the *church*, of which he is a minister? No. That church teaches him “to acknowledge his manifold sins and wickedness, not to put his “trust in any thing that he can do;” (b) and the xiith article maintains, that “good works” (or, virtue, if you please) “cannot put away sin, and endure the severity of GOD's judgment;” consequently cannot furnish an “antidote” against that single “calamity,” a sinner's *obnoxiousness to punishment*, through a violated law. Since, therefore, neither the *spirit*, nor the *word*, nor the *law*, nor the *gospel* of GOD, could possibly have given him the spurious antidote, of which he vainly boasts; and since the church of England totally disavows it, methinks Mr. Y. does well to call it a “SELF-
“ con-

(y) *John* xvi. 8. (z) *Rom.* iii. 19. (a) *Rom.* iii. 20.
(z) Collect for Sexagesima Sunday.

“ conviction ;” for nothing but proud, unrenewed, carnal *self*, under the dominion of the *father of lies*, could inspire so strong a delusion. And that the reader may behold its detestable and ruinous nature exemplified, I beg him to remember the supercilious *Pharisee* in the gospel, (c) whose “ self-conviction of being virtuous,” and the arrogant plea founded upon it, were rejected of God with infinite abhorrence ; while the humble suit of a self-condemned Publican met with acceptance before the throne, through a Mediator. Happy will it be for Mr. Y. if he at last discovers, that *his* self-conviction is a gross self-delusion ; that a *renunciation* of it is indispensably requisite to a participation of the blessings of the gospel ; and that the only efficacious “ *antidote*” against the innumerable calamities, consequent upon *sin*, is an interest through grace, in the atoning blood and justifying righteousness of the Prince of peace.

That we might not be at a loss to find out Mr. Y.’s meaning, when he asserts, that “ a self-conviction of “ being virtuous is an antidote against every calamity,” he adds, “ In this *self-consciousness* of *rectitude* the “ humble christian *resigns his life* into the hands of him “ who *gave* it, without a murmur, without a sigh.” In this single sentence there lurks a great variety of dangerous mistakes. 1. What Mr. Y. calls “ rectitude” is in one point of view absolutely *ideal*. For, if by that term be meant a perfect conformity to the law, or a conduct so upright, as to be fully commensurate with the most extensive requirements of that straight and inflexible rule of moral equity ; it is plain, from scrip-
ture

ture and facts, that human nature, in its present depraved condition, has no claim to any such "rectitude." For it is written, *GOD made man upright; but he hath sought out many inventions.* (d) *There is none righteous, no, NOT ONE.* (e) If by "rectitude" he means an outward decency of conduct, exempt, only, from gross and scandalous vices, he would do well to consider, that the *law is SPIRITUAL*; (f) that a violation of it in the spirit is as really *sin*, as an open transgression in the letter; that a single failure in obedience subjects a sinner to its tremendous curse; (g) that *if a man keep the whole law, and yet offend in ONE point, he is guilty of ALL*; (h) that *if there had been a LAW given, which COULD have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law*; (i) that *if righteousness, or the justification of sinners, come by the law, then CHRIST is dead in vain*; (k) and, therefore, that all pretended "rectitude" of men, being inadequate to the demands of the moral law, and insufficient to justification before a holy God, and unable to put away sin, must be RENOUNCED; since to plead it, as a ground of acceptance and confidence in death, amidst the most irrefragable proofs of its imperfection, would be to contradict the scriptures; to deny the end, and supersede the sanctions of the law; to vacate, as far as in a sinner lieth, the death of CHRIST; and, at one stroke, to make that *redemption*, that greatest work of GOD, an absolute redundancy.

II. When Mr. Y. makes his patient resign his breath in "a *self-consciousness* of rectitude," it is evident

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| (d) <i>Eccl. vii. 29.</i> | (e) <i>Rom. iii. 10.</i> | (f) <i>Rom. vii. 14.</i> |
| (g) <i>Gal. iii. 10.</i> | (h) <i>Jam. ii. 10.</i> | (i) <i>Gal. iii. 21.</i> |
| (k) <i>Gal. ii. 21.</i> | | |

dent he describes a character, blind to the desperate wickedness of the heart ; ignorant of the spirituality, and deaf to the dreadful sentence of a broken law ; totally unacquainted with the gospel-salvation ; and through pride and unbelief, full of arrogant indifference about the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Whatever may be the fond pretensions of sinners through life, yet when they come to lie on " a death-bed," it is shocking to think that any should be so stout-hearted, as to take refuge in self-conscious rectitude, just as they are going to appear at the tribunal of a holy and heart-searching GOD ; and still more shocking, that a Divine should point to such a dangerous asylum. Even *Bellarmino* himself, after all his controversial pleas for the errors of popery, when interrogated on his death-bed concerning the ground of his peace and acceptance, cried out, *CHRISTI meritis confidere tutissimum est* : " It is safest " to trust in the merits of Christ."

III. When our author talks of resigning life into the hands of " him who gave it," how widely different is *HIS nunc dimittis*, from that of dying saints recorded in holy writ ! *They* look to CHRIST in the hour of dissolution ; *he*, to *self*. *They* derive all their peace and confidence from a view of GOD, as their Redeemer ; *he*, considers him only in the relation of Creator. *They* defy death, and overcome sin, by faith in the atonement and obedience of JESUS ; *he* flies to his " self-conscious rectitude." What *he* RESTS UPON, *they* RENOUNCE. Hear a few of their dying testimonies. David says, *Into thy hands I commend my spirit ; for thou hast REDEEMED me, O Lord, thou GOD of truth.* (1)

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And

(1) *Psa.* xxxi. 5.

And now, what wait I for? truly my hope is even in THEE. (m) Though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for THOU art with me. (n) He hath made with me an everlasting covenant (viz. the covenant of grace, made typically with David, but really with Christ, who was the mediator and ratifier of it) ordered in all things, and sure (let Mr. Y. mind what follows) this is all my desire, and ALL MY SALVATION. (o) Martyred Stephen, in the article of death, cried out, LORD JESUS, receive my spirit. (p) Good old Simeon chants to the same humble yet triumphant note, singing, Now LORD, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes HAVE SEEN THY SALVATION. (q) And it is said of the worthies celebrated in Heb. xi. that they all died in faith, (r) committed their souls into the hands of a redeeming GOD, the great object of faith. From whence the reader may see into whose hands he is to resign his immortal soul in death; namely, into the hands of Jesus Christ. And he must take care how he does it; not in "a self-consciousness of rectitude," for then he would fall into the hands of the living, sin-avenging God; but in an humble dependence on the atonement and righteousness of Christ, as the only security from sin and hell.

4. Mr. Y. calls his patient with his self-conscious rectitude, "an humble christian." But surely never was that gracious appellation so notoriously misapplied or perverted. An humble christian is one who entertains low thoughts of himself, and high thoughts of his SAVIOUR;

(m) *Psa.* xxxix. 7. (n) *Psa.* xxiii. 4. (o) *2 Sam.* xxiii. 5.
(p) *Acts* vii. 59. (q) *Luke* ii. 29, 30. (r) *Heb.* xi. 13.

SAVIOUR ; who debases his own works, and exalts the finished work of CHRIST ; especially on a death-bed ; whereas Mr. Y.'s patient, by a fatal inversion of the order of things, is made to think highly of self, and meanly of Christ ; and therefore his " humble christian" is a proud, blind, self-righteous pharisee, whose hope is a spider's web.

5. Our author, still reluctant to drop the description of his self-virtuous patient, even after having consigned him to death, returns to him again, and takes a view of him on a sick-bed. " As he lay on a bed of " sickness," says he, " his *pains* were alleviated by the " genial influence that *virtue* bestows." There is *one pain*, however, to which such a stupid patient must be supposed to be an entire stranger ; and that is, *the sense of guilt in the conscience*, or what Solomon calls a *wounded spirit*. (s) Nothing can cure this malady, or alleviate the pain occasioned by it, but the blood of the Lamb. The law points the arrow ; and none but Christ can draw it out, and close up the wound. But where this is not felt, the physician and the *balm in Gilead*, as in the instance before us, will be equally despised. *The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick*. (t) Hence, that ideal remedy, *virtue*, which is in the mouth of every empiric in theology, is made a substitute for JESUS and his glorious salvation. And hence the words of dying sinners are *healed slightly* by those, who *build a wall, and daub it with untempered mortar, crying peace, peace, when there is NO PEACE*. (u)

6. I am not surprised, where darkness that may be felt hath obscured the intellectual eye, and unbelief

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hath

(s) Prov. xviii. 14. (t) Mat. ix. 12. (u) Jer. vi. 14.

hath hardened the conscience, that Mr. Y. should talk of “ the comforts that the recollection of a well-spent life must administer to his religious votary ; and that “ no doubts, no anxieties disturbed the composure and serenity of his soul.” As to a well-spent life, it is readily acknowledged, that every argument should be urged, and every motive enforced, that have a tendency to recommend and promote it. And, the author of these remarks, wishes, both by precept and precedent, to be as strenuous an advocate for the unreserved and unremitted devotion of the heart and life to the glory of God, as the most laborious legalist upon earth. But, I am bold to declare, and am ready to demonstrate, that no life was ever begun well, spent well, or concluded well, where the governing principles of the heart were those of Mr. Y. For, if it be true, that *without CHRIST we can DO NOTHING*, (x) and that “ works done “ before the grace of Christ are not acceptable to God, “ because they do not spring from faith ;” (y) if the scriptures assert, that *none cometh to the Father, but by CHRIST* ; (z) that *other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is JESUS CHRIST*, (a) *who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption* ; (b) then these doctrines are as little reconcilable with the fashionable system of the day, as that system is, with truth and godliness. To talk of a well-spent life, without adverting to those gospel principles, a vital reception of which is necessary to constitute its essence, is fully as absurd as, for a man to expatiate on the functions of the several members of a body,

(x) John xv. 5. (y) xiiith article of the church of England.
 (z) John xiv. 6. (a) 1 Cor. iii. 11. (b) 1 Cor. i. 30.

body, and never once to consider the grand office of the *soul*, from whose animation they derive all their power of exertion. The great truths, which relate to the person, work, and offices of Emmanuel, are, so to speak, the very soul of the gospel-system; which, when received by faith, pervade all the powers of the mind, and quicken the whole man to chearful obedience. But, without those animating principles, religion, like the body bereft of the soul, is a lifeless and putrid carcase; and, all pretensions to a well-spent life, not founded on them, are nothing but the pleas of a Deist, who affects to live well, and hopes to die well, without any reliance on the life and death of the Son of God. A “religious votary,” therefore, who boasts of his self-conscious rectitude; plumes himself in his conceit of personal goodness; soars on the wings of his applauding conscience; and glories in his well-spent life; is a pitiable character, dead in sin, and alienated from the life of God;—a daring rebel, that would pull the Redeemer from his throne;—a *thief and a robber*, (c) that attempts to climb the fold, and to scale heaven, in open contempt of Jesus, the DOOR (d) of intromission to both. And, as for the “religion” of such a votary, it is nothing but unbelief and pride arrayed in the flimsy garb of formality (e). We shall see the truth of this in a further examination.

7. Sup-

(c) *John* x. 1.

(d) *John* x. 9.

(e) Very excellent and striking is the observation of Hierom.—*Sententiam proferamus adversus eos, qui in Christum non credentes, Fortes, & sapientes, & temperantes se putant esse & justos; ut sciant nullum absque Christo vivere, sine quo omnis virtus in vitio est.* Hierom. in *Gal.* c. 3.

7. Supposing the life of an individual to have been spent as well as the present state will admit of; will "a recollection" thereof be the *ground* of his "comforts" upon a sick-bed? No. If his comforts be genuine, they will flow from a different source. Four pinching considerations prevent a true believer from building, in the views of eternity, any support upon a well-spent life: 1. A consciousness of *imperfection* in his best works, and of pollution in his most holy duties. 2. A retrospect to the commission of actual sins, which merit death, and an inspection of the heart, where ten thousand iniquities lie in embryo, discoverable only to the all-seeing eye of God. 3. A sight and sense of the spirituality, purity, and condemning sentence of GOD's righteous LAW; which is so *broad*, as to extend far beyond the utmost stretch of human righteousness; so *spiritual* as to take cognizance of, and condemn a failure in *thought*, as well as in *act*; whose inflexible *condition* is, *Do this, and live*; (f) and whose tremendous *threatening* is, *Cursed is every one, that continueth not in ALL things, &c* (g) 4. A reflection on the many scriptures, which declare the insufficiency of any, of all, works, to justify before the Holy God. The *first* of these considerations makes him cry out, *Who can understand his errors?* (h) The *second* puts the prayer of the publican into his mouth, *GOD, be merciful to me a sinner*. The *third* makes him pray, *Oh! that I may be found in Christ, not having on mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ*. (i) The *fourth* constrains him

(f) Gal. iii. 12. (g) Gal. iii. 13. (h) Psa. xix. 12.
(i) Phil. iii. 9.

him to plead, with David, *Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in THY sight shall no flesh living be justified.* (k) And all, together, force him, as in an agony, to cry out, *Save LORD, or I perish.* (l) When that king of terrors, *death*, advances with his solemn commission, and unsheathes his deadly *sling*, which receives its *strength* and venom from a fiery law; when Satan presents his accusations, and flings his fiery darts; or, when the written word flashes conviction, and conscience reflects terror; so critically, so dangerously, so awfully circumstanced, the believer throws himself into the arms of an Almighty Redeemer; flies from the impending tempest to the cliffs of that rock of ages; and looking, by faith, to the all-atoning sacrifice and perfect righteousness of the Lamb of God, as his grand shelter from sin and hell, he shouts, *Thanks be to GOD, who giveth me the victory through my LORD JESUS CHRIST.* (m)

8. Thus it is, the believer finds consolation; and from this spring he derives the refreshing water of life, that cheers him in sickness, and animates him in the view of death. JESUS is ALL with him. Nothing but his blood and righteousness can *support*, or *heal*, or *save*, in his estimation. Therefore, in Immanuel's name alone he rejoices all the day; of his righteousness alone he makes mention; and in his salvation he makes his boast. Talk to him of his works, he will tell you, they are all *tarnished*; all *imperfect*: all *wanting*; all to *be renounced*. Suggest to him the idea of comforting himself with a recollection of his well-spent life. He will dread the thought worse than death, and put it from him,

(k) *Psa.* cxliii. 2. (l) *Mat.* xiv. 30. (m) *1 Cor.* xv. 57.

him, as hell. Sensible of his having being an unprofitable servant, he will say, *GOD forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.* (n) From that blessed cross, all his consolation, as well as all his salvation floweth; and through him, who hung upon it as an expiatory sacrifice, a dying victim to infinite justice, and through him alone, he is assured of pardon, is possessed of happiness, and rejoices in hope of the glory of God.

9. Essentially different is this representation of a true believer's ground of peace and confidence, from that of Mr. Y's "religious votary;" whose "composure and "serenity of soul," arising from his "self-consciousness of virtue" are said to be "disturbed with no "doubts, no anxieties." And since there will an awful hour arrive, in which Mr. Y. himself will have occasion to look back to his life, and to look into his heart, it is deeply incumbent upon him to consider, whether the tempers of the one, and the actions of the other have been such, as will correspond with the extensive demands of the law, and justify him at the bar of infinite holiness; or whether his "virtue" will put away sin, and save him from hell. I intreat him to reflect, that there is a *false* peace, as well as a true one;—that a man may go down to the grave with *a lie in his right hand*; (o)—that *there are no bands in the death* (p) of those, who sleep on the downy pillow of proud self-security;—that that confidence, which is not built by faith on the son of God, is impious presumption;—that the "serenity," which does not flow from an application of his precious blood to the conscience, is a self-

(n) *Gal.* vi. 14. (o) *Isa.* xlv. 20. (p) *Psa.* lxxiii. 4.

self-spoken delusion ;—and that nothing in life, death, or the day of judgment, will avail for a sinner's peace and felicity, but a saving interest in the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

10. That the sentiments, urged throughout Mr. Y's discourse, are as fully repugnant to the doctrines of the church of England, as they are irreconcilable with the intire system of the gospel; the following extract, I presume, will fully evince. " We put our faith in
 " CHRIST, that we be justified by HIM ONLY; that
 " we be justified by GOD's free mercy, and the merits
 " of our Saviour CHRIST, ONLY; and by NO VIR-
 " TUE OR GOOD WORKS of our own, that is in us, or
 " that we can be able to have or to do, for to deserve
 " the same: CHRIST HIMSELF ONLY BEING THE
 " CAUSE MERITORIOUS THEREOF. (q) Man cannot
 " make himself righteous by his own works, either in
 " part, or in the whole. For, that were the GREAT-
 " EST ARROGANCY AND PRESUMPTION OF MAN
 " THAT ANTICHRIST COULD SET UP AGAINST
 " GOD, to affirm, that a man might, by his own
 " works, take away and purge his own sins, and so
 " justify himself. (r)

II. Our author in p. 13 and 14 pours high encomiums on the ministerial deportment of his deceased friend; of whom he says, that " his admonitions from
 " the pulpit were the voice of truth and soberness." This panegyric, however just, comes with an ill grace from the person who has assumed the office of panegyrist. For, if Mr. *Parsons's* printed discourses contain the most authentic declaration of his sentiments; and

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if

(q) Hom. of salvation, 3d part.

(r) *Ibidem*, 2d part.

if these are conveyed in “ words of *truth* and *soberness*,” as I really believe them to be ; then Mr. Y. must either retract his eulogium, or recant his own system : for, never did rector and curate so widely differ as in the present instance. Let the following passages in Mr. *Parsons’s* two excellent discourses, intitled, “ *The doctrine of salvation*,” bear witness. — “ This should particularly affect him, who would wish to obtain heaven by his own perfections only ; because he will find that the task is too arduous for human nature to complete : it is *impossible* to be done by the degenerate son of Adam. And if we had no other hopes of gaining heaven, but by our *own works* only, we should have reason to wish we had never been born. For, what a terrible prospect must it be for any one, who looks death in the face ! He may strive, but he strives in vain ; for he cannot be justified by the *works of the law*, if he fail of absolute *perfection*, which his OWN CONSCIENCE TELLS HIM HE DOES ;” (a very different kind of conscience this, from Mr. Y.’s approving one, that boasts of its self-consciousness of rectitude ; “ and therefore, if he cannot have salvation upon any other terms, than upon perfect obedience, he must be undone for ever and ever. (f) Will you then rest your salvation upon your *own* merits and deserts, and not upon those of your SAVIOR ? Will you *vainly suppose*, that *your* righteousness will be accepted by God, and that you need no atonement through the blood of JESUS CHRIST our LORD ? Remember what St. Paul saith, *Rom. ix. 31, 32. Phil. iii. 9*. He well knew the ARROGANCE of those,

who

(f) See p. 18 of Mr. Parsons’s discourses, printed in the year 1770.

“ who should venture to rest their salvation upon the
 “ merit of their own performances : for what man is
 “ there, who has not transgressed the commands of his
 “ God ? (t) CHRIST is the meritorious cause of our
 “ salvation. (u)—And to say that Christ suffered upon
 “ the cross to save us, when we could have saved our-
 “ selves, is the very same as to say, a man was executed
 “ to save me, who needed no Savior. (x)—Salvation
 “ is said to come by CHRIST, through faith, and *not*
 “ *of our own works*, lest we should boast, and make the
 “ cross of CHRIST of none effect, by assuming merit
 “ to ourselves, which is due only to the Son of GOD (y)
 “ Think no longer you shall be saved by your own
 “ works only ; for, believe me (N. B.) it is a FALSE
 “ AND ABSURD OPINION, GROUNDLESS IN SCRIP-
 “ TURE, A VERY DANGEROUS DELUSION AND MIS-
 “ TAKE, AND A GREAT DISPARAGEMENT TO THE
 “ RELIGION YOU PROFESS.” (z)

This is a noble testimony to the fundamental truths
 of the everlasting gospel. It does great honor to the
 person and work of the Redeemer ; lays all human
 righteousness level with the dust ; and exalts JESUS
 alone, as the justifying righteousness of all who believe
 in him. But what says Mr. Y ? Are the doctrines of
 Mr. *Parsons* “ the words of truth and soberness ?—
 “ untainted with enthusiasm and superstition ?” So
 Mr. Y. has said ; and so I affirm. But are they Mr.
Young’s doctrines ? No. The sermons of the worthy
 deceased rector, and that of the surviving curate, ex-
 hibit the most striking contrast. The rays of evange-

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lical

(t) P. 16.

(u) P. 22.

(x) P. 23.

(y) P. 26.

(z) P. 39.

lical truth shine throughout the former ; clouds of thick darkness rest on the latter. Self, virtue, works, constitute the foundation of Mr. Y.'s system : In the doctrine of salvation taught by Mr. P. Christ is ALL. And, if Mr. P.'s be the words of truth and soberness, can Mr. Y.'s sentiments, so diametrically opposite, be exempt from the charge of enthusiasm and superstition ?

Thus have I considered the various errors which taint Mr. Young's sentiments ; and which, I am sorry to say, have too many abettors in this day of rebuke and blasphemy. The number of " recumbent *virtue's*" " downy doctors" increases fast ; and, to exalt the sinner, and debase the Savior, is the reprobate theology too much in vogue among churchmen and dissenters. But, since what is fashionable is not always valuable ; it is to be hoped, the cautious reader will *prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.* (a)

As to the person, upon whose discourse I have made the preceding remarks, I must beg leave to observe, that though the futility of his performance by no means merited the labor I have taken in dissecting it ; yet, as Mr. Y. has exactly copied the dialect of our moral divines, who have moralized to such an extravagant degree, as to exclude the Redeemer from their systems, and to banish true morality from among us ; I thought the animadversions, which would suit *him*, might be equally applicable to many of his neighbors. By considering the errors of a single sermon, one has an opportunity of refuting the sentiments of a *hundred* modern publications of the like nature. For a trifling difference in the diction only excepted, they are

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(a) 1 *Thess.* v. 21.

in general all the same. The favorite plan is to ring changes upon the words *virtue* and *morality*;—to tickle the ears of carnal hearers with soothing declamations on the meritorious excellency of *charity* and *good works*;—to say very pompous things about moral rectitude and man's dignity—a subject which the pride of a carnal heart is sure always to relish;—never to drop a hint about the guilt and depravation of human nature, except in such terms as convey an idea of a very trifling injury;—to avoid all representations of man as a *sinner*, a *rebel*, a *child of wrath*, lest the hearers should conclude, that under these humiliating characters, the want of a Savior, the necessity of reconciliation, and the need of a better righteousness than their own, should be implied;—to shun all descriptions of the *fall* of the first man, lest his children should think they were fallen too; or, if the preacher should be so complaisant as to allow, that a death of the *body* is a consequence of Adam's disobedience, yet never to insinuate, that there is any intail of guilt upon the *soul*, even though an apostle declares, that *judgment came upon all men to condemnation*, and that *BY the disobedience of one, many were made sinners*;—to urge the necessity of reformation, but never to touch upon the *new birth*, and an inward charge of heart by the spirit of God;—to talk about godliness, but never to suppose the practice of it incompatible with conformity to the world;—to speak against *pleasures*, but never to *specify* any; and in such lax terms, that all pleasure-takers may think themselves licenced, in the opinion of their ministers, to break their baptismal vow with impunity, while they “ follow
“ the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and
“ crowd

“ crowd to the play-house, the masquerade, the assembly, &c.”—to take a text out of the bible, but so totally to leave it and the context unconsidered; as if *Seneca* or *Epicletus* might have furnished as good an one; or as if the matter of that divine book were superseded or rendered superfluous by the refined ethics of heathen philosophers;—to preach against some outward sins, but never to probe the *heart*, and shew the necessity of its inward purification by renewing grace;—to declaim upon the innate powers and the uncontrollable liberty of the will of man, lest the people should think that a divine and *supernatural power* must operate in their salvation; never to appeal to the *thirty-nine articles*, or make extracts from our *Homilies*, or *Liturgy*, lest the hearers should think highly of our *Reformers*, who sealed the truths contained in them with their blood, and *meanly* of those, who, with a base servility, can equivocate and falsify for filthy lucre’s sake; and who attempt to make a *lie* defensible, by quibbles, which only render it more odious, and themselves more guilty;—to say little, or nothing, or worse than nothing, of JESUS CHRIST; to introduce, but very seldom, his blessed name into their sermons, and then only *by-the-bye*; not designedly, as if any honors were intended for it, but only *en passant*; and when introduced, to deprectate, if not blaspheme, the glorious personage who bears it, by representing him only as a moral teacher, and keeping intirely out of view his *offices*, his *deity*, his *atonement*, his *righteousness*, lest sinners should abandon the thought of being their own Saviors, and be obligated to another for their whole salvation.

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This is the plan upon which your rational divines proceed, and agreeably to which they frame their discourses. And a most miserable, blind, deistical, and soul-destroying one it is ; highly dishonouring to the great head of the church, and repugnant to that glorious gospel-system, in which he is All in all. Nor is it less ruinous to the immortal interests of those who hear and embrace it, than detrimental to the cause of true religion. Some of the clergy have gone on preaching morality, though the inefficacy and absurdity of their conduct have been loudly proclaimed by the abounding of every species of immorality on all sides of them. Or, to use the just complaint of a great man, " We have been preaching morality, till there is hardly any morality left in the land." All classes of abandoned sinners lie immersed in their respective abominations, and all descriptions of votaries to pleasure and dissipation continue their giddy round of sensual gratification, without one single monument to attest the power or utility of the moral scheme. Dreadful blindness is conspicuous in those who *lead*, and those who *are led*. This is their curse ; and to *fall into the ditch*, the fatal end that awaits both. We might defy any moralizing preacher throughout the kingdom to produce *one* sinner that has been *converted* by his instrumentality. Melancholy thought ! Years of ministerial labor (if one can call that labor, where zeal is dormant and truth lies dead) have been exhausted without *any* success, in numberless instances. The hearers attend, and go away, year after year, from the moral harangue, very well pleased with *themselves*, the *preacher*, and their *lusts*. They are satisfied perfectly,
and

and often sleep soundly, under the same dull note, which charms them to rest on the bed of carnal security, and sings a requiem to their delusions; from which nothing can awaken them, but the sound of truth, or the flames of Tophet. The teacher finds them stupid, careless, carnal, abandoned, ignorant, formal; and so they remain, till death summons him to give an account of his stewardship, and both are cited to the bar of God in the same lethargic state of soul. As there is nothing in the *matter* composed by moralists calculated to edify, so neither does their *manner* tend to rouse attention and keep it awake. Few of them ever seem in earnest. A little declamation, *dry—moral—borrowed—* of ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes (the fashionable length) *read—or rather, murdered in reading—without action—without elevation of voice—without emphasis of accent—hurried through—begun carelessly—ended abruptly—* patch-work throughout—with a scrap, perhaps, from the *Spectator*, or from Tillotson, or from Clarke, or the author of *Tristram Shandy*, mixed, jumbled together, a goodly mess—is the favourite mode with many moralists, whose *eyes* are tender and do not relish reading much; whose *hands* are too delicate to hold a pen, and therefore they fly to *Doctor Trusser* for his *copper-plates*; (*b*) whose *lungs* are of too refined a texture to bear

(*b*) There are sermons, printed in characters so exactly resembling manuscript, that at a small distance, they would deceive the most discerning eye. They are to be purchased at a very moderate price, and are intended to save our young clergy the trouble, not only of *composing* (a practice very rare in the present day) but even of *transcribing*. Could the ingenious doctor now but add one discovery more to the present invention, viz, that of pointing

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bear frequent, long, or loud preaching; and whose *stomachs* are so squeamishly formed; as to nauseate the evangelical food of *grace, regeneration, justification, divine influence, conversion, dependence on CHRIST, assurance, holiness of heart, deadness to the world, &c. &c.*

So much for their matter and manner. Both are wretched, and do no good. Would they reform? let them preach Christ and him crucified. Since the moral mode has been tried, and to no purpose; let them now make trial of the gospel plan. Let them preach forgiveness of sins to a guilty world, through the blood of the Lamb. Would they wish to moralize with a witness? Let them publish the love of JESUS as the grand morality. (c) Do they desire to advance the interests of holiness? Let them preach the necessity of faith in *Christ*, to *purify the heart*, and *work by love*. Would they lay the axe to the root of sin, in the heart? Let them offer a free and full salvation from its guilt and dominion, through the adorable Immanuel. Would they be instrumental in healing the sin-sick, relieving the burdened conscience, liberating the enslaved captive, cleansing the foul leper, giving wisdom to the ignorant? In short, would they wish to glorify

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God,

out a method, by which the dreadful fatigue of *reading* these same uncomposed and untranscribed sermons might be avoided, I am sure, he would highly gratify his indolent customers, and procure a most rapid sale of his moral commodities; as well as consummate a plan, for which, the name of *Trusler* would be for ever memorable in the *castle of indolence*.

(c) "Talk they of *morals*? O thou bleeding love!

"Thou maker of new morals to mankind!

"The grand morality is, *love of THEE*!"

YOUNG.

God, to save themselves and those who hear them? Let them preach CHRIST in his person, work and offices. Let them point to his blood, display his righteousness, and publish his salvation. Otherwise nothing will be done in themselves or others.

Oh! for faithful ministers, thus to labor in the vineyard! to preach CHRIST fully, and exalt him gloriously! blessed be GOD! there are some such who reverence *truth*, love their *bibles*, fear an *oath*, and hate *sin*. The Lord increase their number, and prosper their work! that error may hide its head, and truth prevail! that the glorious gospel may spread extensively, and with it, the matchless fame and almighty power of JESUS! and that multitudes may flock to the standard of the Saviour's cross, who shall experience his all-sufficiency to save, and shine as jewels in his crown in the day, when he *shall be glorified in his saints, and admired in them that believe.*



F I N I S.